

Getting students in the door and keep them dancing for life

The main goal of dance marketing is attracting new students to come to your studio, whether they are experienced dancers or those looking for a recreational activity.

Many new students are likely to start as a beginner so it's important to highlight how easy it is to take up dancing and give as much information as you can about the range of levels and types of dance that you offer. Clear advice on clothing, equipment requirements and costs are also very helpful in answering questions that might arise for new dancers.

Experienced dancers may also be in search of a new studio, so you should aim to tailor your marketing to appeal to a variety of ability levels. Providing information about the awards and recognition that your studio has won as well as giving case studies about past and present students can also help to convince new dancers to choose you.

Go where the people are

Whatever their age or skill, most students will start by looking online. 92% of Americans cite an internet search as the avenue they most frequently use to find products and services.* Although search engines such as Google are the primary starting point for finding out information before making a purchase or choosing an activity, blogs, social networks and other types of user-generated content are now increasingly more likely to be used than traditional sources such as magazines and newspapers.



Traditional printed materials can still be very effective, but all of this increased online activity and the ability to browse the internet anywhere on a mobile phone means that an informative and up-to-date website is an essential part of your marketing strategy.

Flyers can often be an inexpensive way of reaching new students, encouraging them to become part of your dance community and can also provide important information for your existing classes. At open days or by sending out mailshots with local newspapers and publications, you can use your flyers as an invitation to come along and join in. As well as providing an email address and phone number, include a sign-up form on the back of your flyer so that potential students can give you their contact details.

Think about where else you might find potential students. And think about the different age groups and social types – single people might be put off starting a class if they think they'll not have a partner. Your studio might be able to give them another way have fun and meet new people. Perhaps you could offer special wedding packages, which offer the new couple options for learning their first dance. Are there local youth groups or arts organisations that you could appeal to? And don't forget the older demographic who might be completely new to the world of dance, or rediscover a passion they once had.

Maintaining interest

Inspire your young dancers by taking them to see live performances, whether local musical productions or performances by major touring groups. Even showing and discussing DVDs of famous dancers and performances can provide fresh motivation for their studies. Making friends with similar interests and building camaraderie is a great benefit of taking a dance class and any extra opportunities you can provide for learning together is invaluable. Think about their career progression and give them regular updates on any scholarships that they may be eligible for and encourage them to attend other workshops and seminars that will help them to develop their potential.

Consider some partnerships with local businesses that offer supplies for dance classes. If you can give your students exclusive discounts and special deals, they'll appreciate the efforts you've gone to on their behalf – and so will the parents of your younger students! Your printed flyer can double as a discount coupon or ticket to a special event and you could also provide discounts on the rates of your studio rental services.

Your best marketing tool is a satisfied student. Keep your customers happy and give them the incentive to continue dancing and not only will they keep coming back, but they'll spread the word and tell other people about you. All of the wonderful aspects of dance – the lifelong benefits for the body, mind and the social aspects of life – should make it easy to market your business. With good preparation and creative marketing you can present dance to a whole new range of people, get them through your studio doors and keep them dancing for life!

* Source: "Majority of Top Media Destinations Are Social", 21 April 2010, eMarketer.com

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